

CAR-70  
Exeter  
Federalburg  
Private

Circa 1800

Exeter is one of the earliest surviving dwellings in Federalburg and certainly the largest of the early dwellings dating from around 1800. It has an uncommon form and plan. Its front portion is two full stories with well-detailed architrave and the walls are covered with split cypress shingles. The plan consists of an entrance/stair passage and a living room, with mostly original woodwork.

Behind this section is a more typical 1 1/2 story dwelling which appears earlier, but may be contemporary. It has a two room plan with central chimney servicing both rooms. On the extreme end of the house is a small leanto.

Two outbuildings exist on the property--a brick smokehouse and a frame dairy.

The property is on the National Register.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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DATE ENTERED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORMSEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Exeter

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**STREET & NUMBER West side of Maryland Rt. 630, .5 miles north of Md.  
Route 318

CITY, TOWN

Federalsburg

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

First

STATE

Maryland

VICINITY OF  
CODE

COUNTY

Caroline

CODE

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

## CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT☒ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT

## OWNERSHIP

☐ PUBLIC☒ PRIVATE☐ BOTH

## PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED

## STATUS

☐ OCCUPIED☒ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

## ACCESSIBLE

☐ YES: RESTRICTED☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED☒ NO

## PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE☐ COMMERCIAL☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ GOVERNMENT☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ MILITARY☐ MUSEUM☐ PARK☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ RELIGIOUS☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ TRANSPORTATION☒ OTHER:**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Holt

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Exeter

CITY, TOWN

Federalsburg

VICINITY OF

STATE

Maryland 21632

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Caroline County Courthouse

STREET &amp; NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Denton

STATE

Maryland 21629

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

## 7 DESCRIPTION

CAR-70

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Exeter, located on Maryland Route 630 north of the town extremities of Federalsburg, is a unique survival of early 19th century architecture in Caroline County. It is composed of two distinct sections, although there is little evidence that the building was built in two phases, except for the addition of a lean-to on the western end of the house.

The building faces east and overlooks the road with Marshy Hope Creek beyond. Its front section is a three-bay wide, two-story frame structure built on a brick foundation and covered with cedar shingles. The entrance, located in the southern bay of the facade, possesses side-lights with shutters and a transom with flanking consoles supporting a full pediment. An outline of an earlier porch can be seen above the architrave. The windows of the first story have 6/9 sash while those of the second story and the rear of the house have 6/6 sash. All have louvered shutters. In the south gable is a window with 6/3 sash and the remains of the same type shutter. The north gable end reveals the brick back of the first story fireplace.

Behind the south side of the tall portion of the building is a one and one-half story frame wing, four bays long, covered with beaded weather-board. There are two doors and two windows, with two dormers on the " roof. A tall brick chimney rises from the center of this section. As mentioned earlier, there is also a small leanto or shed addition sloping from the west gable. It has three windows with six pane case-ments and louvered shutters. To the north of the leanto is a deteriorated brick meathouse and to the south is a deteriorated frame milkhouse.

Beginning with the east side of the house, the floor plan consists of a stair hall and living room, retaining all original work except for the lower newel post. There is an open string stair with delicate balustrade with square balusters, turned newels and round handrail. The step-ends have a wave-like outline typical of the early 19th century. There is a closet beneath this stair with four panel door. Around the doors and windows is two part trim while the chair rail has three parts. From the hall a door opens into the living room, and one opposite the entrance opens into the wing. In the living room the trim is the same as in the hall except for the mantel. It is a very well executed form of folk decoration with a carved sunburst in the center of the frieze and four smaller segments in the corners. There are fluted pilasters on consoles and a course of gougework and drill holes.

In the wing are two rooms, each warmed by the central chimney. In the middle room is panelling brought in from Liden's Adventure at Smithville, a few miles north of Federalsburg. The ceiling has exposed beaded joists and flooring. The trim is plainer than that in the

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Exeter  
Federalburg,  
Maryland

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 1

DESCRIPTION (continued)

front of the house. South of the chimney is the door to the back room which is treated in the same manner as the middle room. From this room there is a stair to the second floor. From a line in the ceiling it is evident that the chimney breast and stair had panelling that was probably similar to that brought in from Liden's Adventure. In the end of the room is a door leading into the small leanto room which is a single step down.

The second floor of the main block is unusual, as the main stair ascends in two flights at right angles, thus ascending in the back of the east portion. From the second story hall there are two bedrooms in the main part and one in the wing. Originally the smaller bedroom was two smaller rooms.

The living room chamber has very good panelling and mantel with original paint intact. It has a closet and enclosed stair to the unfinished attic.

There are also two plain rooms above the wing.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

CAR-70

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
PREHISTORIC	__ ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	__ COMMUNITY PLANNING	__ LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	__ RELIGION		
__ 1400-1499	__ ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	__ CONSERVATION	__ LAW	__ SCIENCE		
__ 1500-1599	__ AGRICULTURE	__ ECONOMICS	__ LITERATURE	__ SCULPTURE		
__ 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	__ EDUCATION	__ MILITARY	__ SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN		
__ 1700-1799	__ ART	__ ENGINEERING	__ MUSIC	__ THEATER		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	__ COMMERCE	__ EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__ PHILOSOPHY	__ TRANSPORTATION		
__ 1900-	__ COMMUNICATIONS	__ INDUSTRY	__ POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__ OTHER (SPECIFY)		
		__ INVENTION				

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Architecturally Exeter is the best preserved early 19th century vernacular building in Caroline County, especially in the realm of original decoration. It appears to be the earliest existing building in the vicinity of Federalsburg. The use of cypress shingle siding, often found in Worcester County, is unique to date in Caroline County. Its floor plans are also unique, indicating a builder of some sophistication. The rear portion of the building is very similar to other early 19th century dwellings in lower Caroline County and portions of Dorchester County.

Thomas Dell (or Dill) was the Episcopal rector of St. Mary's White Chapel in Fowling Creek from circa 1729 to 1753. He was granted a 50-acre tract in December 1731 which he called Exeter, located on the Northwest Fork of the Nanticoke River, seven miles from his church. (Patent 8/698.) In October 1751 Dell sold this parcel to William Ennals. In the deed it was described as "that tract or parcel of land called Exeter, . . . including the now dwelling Plantation of said Thomas Dell." (Deed [1751]/547.) The latter then sold Exeter back to Dell's son Frederick in 1760. (Old 17/273.) Abraham Lewis was the next owner, a planter who purchased Exeter and two other tracts from Dell in 1777. (Deed A/226.)

In the 1783 Tax Assessment for Caroline County, Abraham Lewis is listed in Lower Choptank Hundred. He owned parts of Exeter (misspelled "Eetor") and Taylors Outlett, 40 acres of which were arable and 76 wooded, valued together at £46. Both the land and the improvements on it were called "indifferent." Lewis owned no slaves and no black cattle, and lived alone on the property. Other assets were two horses and £30 worth of other property. (The records for Lower Choptank Hundred in the Federal Direct Tax of 1798 are missing.)

Lewis, then living in Dorchester County, sold the tracts in 1808 to James B. Robbins for £500, £408 more than Lewis had paid originally. This would seem to indicate that the present dwelling known as Exeter, and probably other improvements as well, were built during the ownership of Abraham Lewis.

It is interesting that at the same time he purchased Exeter, Robbins so bought the Exeter Mill from Solomon Bartlett for \$4,000. (Deed 1/669.) The mill was situated across the road from the dwelling, and

see continuation sheet #2

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Caroline County  
CONTINUATION SHEET Maryland ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

**SIGNIFICANCE (continued)**

both were under the same ownership until 1854, giving Exeter the occasional name of "the Mill House."

The house and mill were sold with other land in 1826 to Meshack and John Elliott who held it until the latter's death in 1854. (Deed P/189.) During this period the Exeter Mill was one of the leading businesses in Caroline County. The water-powered mill was built on several tracts and had a large pond of about 100 acres. It was used at various times as a saw mill, a wool carding mill and a grist mill. Burned between 1915 and 1935, the mill was last used to power the generator which provided Federalsburg with its first electricity.

Elliott's executors sold the house separately, in 1854, to William S. Goslin. (Deed CC/129.) The property was thereafter transferred five times until it was acquired by the present owners in 1967. Now unoccupied, Exeter will be restored by the Holts.

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

CAR-70

Hall of Records, Annapolis, and Caroline County Courthouse, Denton  
Tax Assessment of 1783, Caroline County, Lower Choptank Hundred  
Land Records of Caroline County.

Noble, Edward M., et. al. History of Caroline County, Maryland, from its  
Beginning. Reprint of 1920 ed. Baltimore: Regional Publishing Co.,  
1971.

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one acre

UTM REFERENCES

A 

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ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B 

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ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C 

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D 

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

bjn

NAME / TITLE

Pamela James, Assistant Historian

Michael Bourne, Architectural Consultant

ORGANIZATION

Maryland Historical Trust

DATE

Dec. 1976

STREET & NUMBER

Shaw House, 21 State Circle

TELEPHONE

s (301) 269-2438

CITY OR TOWN

Annapolis,

U STATE

Maryland 21401

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL     

STATE     

LOCAL     

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

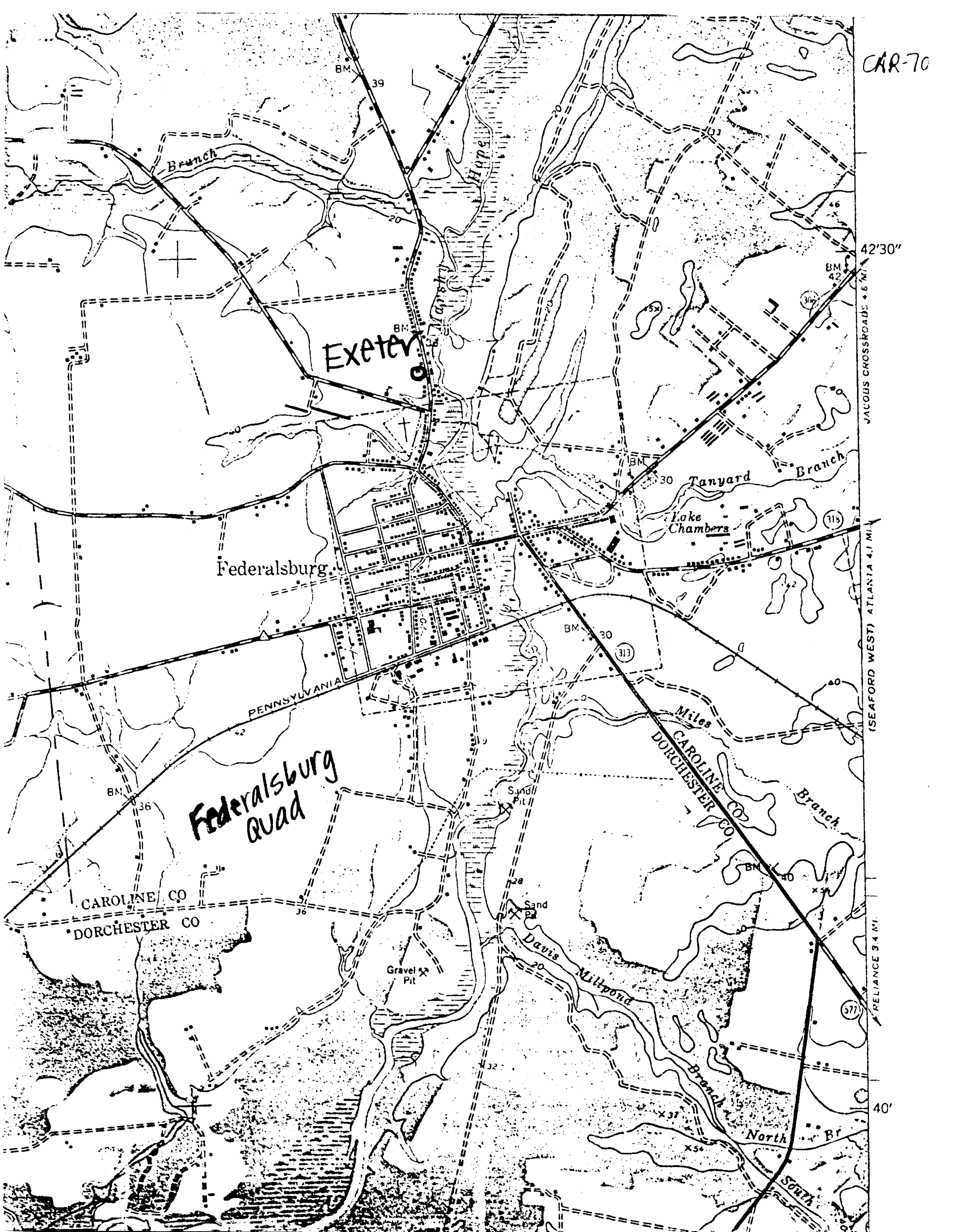
TEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



CAR-70



Exeter

Federalsburg

Federalburg Quad

CAROLINE CO  
DORCHESTER CO

Miles  
CAROLINE CO  
DORCHESTER CO

42'30"

(SEAFORD WEST) ATLANTA 4.1 MI

RELANCE 3.4 MI

40'





70 73

CAR 70  
EXETER

